

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 15485 191813Z
ACTION NEA-10

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STADIS//////////

FOR NEA/RA HOLLY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, EG
SUBJECT: IV PROGRAM IN CONNECTION WITH AFL-CIO CONVENTION

REF: (A) STATE 216900; (B) STATE 221453

1. LRO INFORMED EFL PRESIDENT AHMAD SEPT 17 OF AFL-CIO INTENTION INVITE HIM TO ATTEND LOS ANGELES CONVENTION AND OF SUBJECT PROGRAM OFFERED IN CONNECTION. AHMAD SAID HE TRAVELING SEPT 18 TO TUNIS AND COULD NOT DECIDE WITHOUT CONSULTING WITH EFL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. HE PROMISED TO DO SO AND HAVE ANSWER BY OCT 1. HE WILL ALSO HAVE MADE DETERMINATION AS TO PARTICIPATION IN IV PROGRAM BY THEN. WILL ADVISE ASAP THEREAFTER. PLEASE INFORM CU.

2. MEETING WITH AHMAD BEGAN WITH HIS LONG AND OBVIOUSLY PREPARED STATEMENT ON VARIETY OF ISSUES. FROM HIS COMMENTS, IT CLEAR HE UNHAPPY WITH FACT THAT CERTAIN HEADS OF CONSTITUENT UNIONS HAVE DECIDED UNILATERALLY IN PAST TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF VEOGRAMS IN U.S. AHMAD MADE CASE AT LENGTH THAT SUCH TRAVEL WAS SUBJECT TO EFL APPROVAL AND GENERALLY ADVANCED PROPOS-
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TION THAT HE IS IN FULL CONTROL OF EFL. WITH REGARD TO MIDDLE EAST, HE EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE PLEASURE WITH RECENT U.S. STATEMENTS (WIDELY PUBLICIZED HERE) WHICH HE FOLLOWING "WITH GREAT INTEREST" AND WHICH, IN OPINION OF HIS COLLEAGUES, MARK FAVORABLE EVOLUTION OF U.S. ME POLICY. AHMAD SAID HE REGRETTED "AFL-CIO BACKWARDNESS ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES" AND ITS EFFORTS TO RESTRAIN USG. SAID IT WAS ALSO TOO BAD THAT AFL-

CIO WAS NOT INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING RELATIONS WITH EGYPTIAN LABOR. CONCLUDED THAT EFL WANTS TO REMAIN NONALIGNED IN ITS RELATIONS BUT WOULD WELCOME TIES WITH U.S. LABOR. (COMMENT: HE ALWAYS SAYS THIS, BUT HAS PRIVATELY THROWN CONSIDERABLE WATER ON U.S. TRAVEL OF UNION LEADERS IN PARTICULAR AND ON GENERAL NOTION OF IMPROVED RELATIONS IN LABOR FIELD.)

3. AHMAD WAS CLEARLY ASTONISHED WHEN LRO THEN INFORMED HIM OF AFL-CIO INTENT TO INVITE HIM TO ATTEND CONVENTION AND OF RELATED DETAILS. TOLD HIM AFL-CIO WOULD NEED PRIOR NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO ACCEPT INVITATION BEFORE IT COULD BE ISSUED AND OF OUR WILLINGNESS PROVIDE TRUNCATED IV PROGRAM. AHMAD REPLIED CAUTIOUSLY BUT POSITIVELY, AS REPORTED ABOVE. WHETHER HE ATTENDED OR NOT, HE SAID, THANKS SHOULD BE CONVEYED TO AFL-CIO FOR ITS INVITATION.

4. COMMENT: AHMAD IS ON SENSITIVE GROUND, WITH REGARD TO INVITATION. THERE ARE ADVANTAGES TO HIM IN ACCEPTING INVITATION-- JUMP ON GOE-US BANDWAGON (PROVIDED WHEELS DON'T FALL OFF), GET LEG UP ON HIS PRO-US INTERNAL OPPOSITION OR TURN IT INTO WEAPON AGAINST THEM IF THAT SERVES HIS INTERESTS. AND THERE ARE DISADVANTAGES--HIS KNOWN PRIVATE VIEWS, THE DISAPPROVAL OF HIS FRIENDS WITHIN THE EFL AND OF INFLUENTIAL COMMUNIST EMBASSY LOBBYISTS, FEAR THAT AMERICAN CONNECTION MAY NOT PAY OFF FOR SADAT OR HIMSELF, AND LIKELY ADVERSE REACTION OF SOME OTHER ARAB LABOR LEADERS. IN VIEW OF HIS RECOURSE TO EXECUTIVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMMITTEE FOR DECISION, BELIEVE IT LIKELY INVITATION WILL BE ACCEPTED BUT THAT AHMAD WILL BE CAUTIOUS NOT TO GIVE IMPRESSION THAT HE ENJOYING HIMSELF TOO MUCH. MEANWHILE, IT CLEAR THAT RECENT EVOLUTION OF U.S. ME POSITION HAS HAD FAVORABLE IMPACT AND WILL PLAY PART IN EXCOMM VIEWS. MATTHEWS

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